The Gentleman From Indiana

By BOOTH TARKINGTON

CHAPTER V.

THE bright sun of circus day shone into Harkless' window, and he awoke to find himself smiling. For a little while he lay content, drowsily wondering why he smiled, only knowing that there was something new. It was thus as a boy he had wakened on birthday mornings or on Christmas or on the Fourth of July, drifting happily out of pleasant dreams into the consciousness of long awaited delights that had come true, yet lying only half awake in a cheerful borderland, leaving happiness undefined.

The morning breeze was fluttering at his window blind, a honeysuckle vine tapped lightly on the pane. Birds were trilling, warbling, whistling, and from the street came the rumbling of wagons, merry cries of greeting and the barking of dogs. What was it made him feel so young and strong and light hearted? The breeze brought him the smell of June roses, fresh and sweet with dew, and then he knew why he had come smiling from his dreams. He leaped out of bed and shouted loudly: "Zen! Hello, Xenophon!"

In answer an ancient, very black darky, his warped and wrinkled visage showing under his grizzled hair like charred paper in a fall of pine ashes, put his head in at the door and said: "Good mawn', suh. Yessuh. Hit's done pump' full. Good mawn', suh."

A few moments later the colored man, seated on the front steps of the cottage, heard a mighty splashing within while the rafters rang with stentorian song:

"He promised to buy me a bonny blue ribbon,
He promised to buy me a bonny blue ribbon,
He promised to buy me a bonny blue ribbon,
To tie up my bonny brown hair.

"Oh, dear, what can the matter be?
Oh, dear, what can the matter be?
Oh, dear, what can the matter be?
Johnnie's so long at the fair!"

The listener's jaw dropped, and his mouth opened and stayed open. "Him!" he muttered faintly. "Singin'!"

"Well the old triangle knew the music of our tread;
How the peaceful Seminole would tremble in his bed!"

sang the editor.

"I dunno huccome it," exclaimed the old man, "but, bless Gawd, de young man happy!" A thought struck him suddenly, and he scratched his head. "Maybe he goin' away," he said querulously. "What become of ole Zen?" The splashing ceased, but not the voice, which struck into a noble marching chorus.

"Oh, my Lawd," said the colored man, "I pray you listen at dat!"

"Soldiers marching up the street.
They keep the time;
They look sublime!
Hear them play 'Die Wacht am Rhein.'
They call it Schneider's band.
Tra la la, la la."

The length of Main street and all sides of the square resounded with the rattle of vehicles of every kind. Since earliest dawn they had been pouring into the village, a long procession, on every country road. The air was full of exhilaration; everybody was laughing and shouting and calling greetings, for Carlow county was turning out, and from far and near the country people came—nay, from over the county line; and clouds of dust arose from every thoroughfare and highway and swept into town to herald their coming.

Dibb Zane, the "sprinkling contractor," had been at work with the town

"Honey, hit baid luck sing 'fo' breakfus'."

water cart since the morning stars were bright, but he might as well have watered the streets with his tears, which, indeed, when the farmers began to come in, bringing their cyclones of dust, he drew nigh unto after a burst of profanity as futile as his cart.

"Tief wie das Meer soll deine Liebe sein," hummed the editor in the cottage. His song had taken on a reflective tone, as that of one who cons a problem or musically ponders which card to play. He was kneeling before an old trunk in his bedchamber. From one compartment he took a neatly folded pair of duck trousers and a light gray tweed coat, from another a straw hat with a ribbon of bright colors. He examined these musingly. They had lain in the trunk for a long time undisturbed. He shook the coat and brushed it. Then he laid the garments upon his bed and proceeded to shave himself carefully, after which he donned the white trousers, the gray coat and, rummaging in the trunk again, found a gay pink cravat, which he fastened about his tall collar (also a resurrection from the trunk) with a pearl pin. He took a long time to arrange his hair with a pair of brushes. When at last it suited him and his dressing was complete, he sallied forth to breakfast.

Xenophon stared after him as he went out of the gate whistling heartily. The old darky lifted his hands, palms outward.

"Lan' name, who dat?" he exclaimed aloud. "Who dat in dem panjingeries? He gone jine de circus!" His hands fell upon his knees, and he got to his feet rheumatically, shaking his head with foreboding. "Honey, honey, hit baid luck, baid luck sing 'fo' breakfus'. Trouble 'fo' de day be done. Trouble, honey, great trouble. Baid luck, baid luck!"

Along the square the passing of the editor in his cool equipments was a progress, and wide were the eyes and deep the gasps of astonishment caused by his festal appearance. Mr. Tibbs and his sister rushed from the post-office to stare after him.

"He looks just beautiful, Solomon," said Miss Tibbs.

Harkless usually ate his breakfast alone, as he was the latest riser in Plattville. There were days in the winter when he did not reach the hotel until 8 o'clock. This morning he found a bunch of white roses, still wet with dew and so fragrant that the whole room was fresh and sweet with their odor, prettily arranged in a bowl on the table, and at his plate the largest of all with a pin through the stem. He looked up smilingly and nodded at the red faced, red haired waitress who was waving a long fly brush over his head. "Thank you, Charmion," he said. "That's very pretty."

"That old Mr. Wimby was here," she answered, "and he left word for you to look out. The whole possetucky of Johnsons from the Crossroads passed his house this mornin', comin' this way, and he see Bob Skillett on the square when he got to town. He left them flowers. Mrs. Wimby sent 'em to ye. I didn't bring 'em."

"Thank you for arranging them."

She turned even redder than she always was and answered nothing, vigorously darting her brush at an imaginary fly on the cloth. After several minutes she said abruptly, "You're welcome."

There was a silence, finally broken by a long, gasping sigh. Astonished, he looked at the girl. Her eyes were set unfathomably upon his pink tie. The wand had dropped from her nerveless hand, and she stood rapt and immovable. She started violently from her trance. "Ain't ye goin' to finish yer coffee?" she asked, plying her instrument again, and, bending slightly, whispered, "Say, Eph Watts is over there behind ye."

At a table in a far corner of the room a large gentleman in a brown frock coat was quietly eating his breakfast and reading the Herald. He was of an ornate presence, though entirely neat. A sumptuous expanse of linen exhibited itself between the lapels of his low cut waistcoat, and an inch of bediamonded breastpin glittered there like an ice ledge on a snowy mountain side. He had a steady blue eye and a dissipated iron gray mustache. This personage was Mr. Ephraim Watts, who, following a calling more fashionable in the eighteenth century than in the latter decades of the nineteenth, had shaken the dust of Carlow from his feet some three years previously at the strong request of the authorities. The Herald had been particularly insistent upon his deportation. In the local phrase, Harkless had "run him out o' town." Perhaps it was because the Herald's opposition, as the editor had explained at the time, had been "merely moral and impersonal," and the editor had confessed to a liking for the unprofessional qualities of Mr. Watts, that there was but a slight embarrassment when the two gentlemen met today. His breakfast finished, Harkless went over to the other and extended his hand. Cynthia, the waitress, held her breath and clutched the back of a chair. However, Mr. Watts made no motion toward his well known hip pocket. Instead he rose, flushing slightly, and accepted the hand offered him.

"I'm glad to see you, Mr. Watts," said the journalist cordially. "And also, if you are running with the circus and calculate on doing business here today, I'll have you fired out of town before noon. How are you? You're looking extremely well."

"Mr. Harkless," answered Watts, "I cherish no hard feelings, and I never said but what you done exactly right when I left, three years ago. No, sir; I'm not here in a professional way at all, and I don't want to be molested. I've connected myself with an oil company, and I'm down here to look over the ground. It beats poker and fantan all hollow, though there ain't as many chances in favor of the dealer, and in oil it's the farmer that gets the rakeoff. I've come back, but in an enterprising spirit this time, to open up a new field and shed light and money in Carlow. They told me never to show my face here again, but if you say I stay I guess I can. I always was sure there was oil in the county, and I want to prove it for everybody's benefit. Is it all right?"

"My dear fellow," laughed the young man, shaking the gambler's hand again, "it is all right. I have always been sorry I had to act against you. Everything is all right. Stay and bore to Korea, if you like. Did ever you see such glorious weather?"

"I'll let you in on some shares," Watts called after him as he turned away. The other nodded in reply and was leaving the room when Cynthia detained him by a flourish of her fly brush. "Say," she said—she always called him "Say"—"you've forget yer flower."

He came back and thanked her. "Will you pin it on for me, Charmion?"

"I don't know what call you got to speak to me out of my name," she responded, looking at the floor moodily.

"Why?" he asked, surprised.

"I don't see why you want to make fun of me."

"I beg your pardon, Cynthia," he said gravely. "I didn't mean to do that. I haven't been considerate. I didn't think you'd be displeased. I'm very sorry. Won't you pin it on my coat?"

Her face was lifted in grateful pleasure, and she began to pin the rose to his lapel. Her hands were large and red and trembled. She dropped the flower and, saying huskily, "I don't know as I could do it right," seized violently upon a pile of dishes and hurried from the room.

Harkless rescued the rose, pinned it on his coat himself, with the internal observation that the red haired waitress was the queerest creature in the village, and set forth upon his holiday.

Mr. Lige Willetts, a stalwart bachelor, the most eligible in Carlow, and a habitual devotee of Minnie Briscoe, was seated on the veranda when Harkless turned in at the gate of the brick house. "The ladies will be down right off," he said, greeting the editor's cool finery with a perceptible agitation and the editor himself with a friendly shake of the hand. "Mildy says to wait out here."

There was a faint rustling within the house, the swish of draperies on the stairs, a delicious whispering, when light feet descend, tapping, to hearts that beat an answer, the telegraphic message: "We come! We come! We are near! We are near!" Lige Willetts stared at Harkless. He had never thought the latter was good looking until he saw him step to the door to take Helen Sherwood's hand and say, in a strange, low, tense voice, "Good morning," as if he were announcing, at the least: "Every one in the world, except us two, died last night. It is a solemn thing, but I am very happy."

They walked, Minnie and Mr. Willetts, a little distance in front of the others. Harkless could not have told afterward whether they rode or walked or floated on an airship to the courthouse. All he knew distinctly was that a divinity in a pink shirt waist and a hat that was woven of gauzy cloud by mocking fairies to make him stoop hideously to see under it dwelt for the time on earth and was at his side, dazzling him in the morning sunshine. Last night the moon had lent her a silvery glamour. She had something of the ethereal whiteness of night dews in that watery light, a nymph to laugh from a sparkling fountain at the moon, or, as he thought, remembering her courtesy for his pretty speech, perhaps a little lady of King Louis' court wandering down the years from Fontainebleau and appearing to clumsy mortals sometimes of a summer night when the moon was in their heads.

But today she was of the daintiest color, a pretty girl whose gray eyes twinkled to his in gay companionship. He marked how the sunshine danced across the shadows of her fair hair and seemed itself to catch a luster rather than impart it, and the light of the June day drifted through the gauzy hat to her face, touching it with a delicate and tender flush that came and went like the vibrating pink of early dawn. She had the divinest straight nose, tip tilted a faint, alluring trifle, and a dimple cleft her chin, "the deadliest maelstrom in the world!" He thrilled through and through. He had been only vaguely conscious of the dimple in the night. It was not until he saw her by daylight that he really knew it was there.

The village hummed with life before them. They walked through shimmering airs, sweeter to breathe than nectar is to drink. She caught a butterfly basking on a jimson weed, and before she let it go held it out to him in her hand. It was a white butterfly. He asked which was the butterfly.

"Bravo!" she said, tossing the captive craft above their heads and watching

She fastened her rose in place of the white one.

the small sails catch the breeze. "And so you can make little flatteries in the morning too. It is another courtesy you should be having from me if it weren't for the dustiness of it. Wait till we come to the board walk."

She had some big pink roses at her waist.

Indicating these, he answered, "In the meantime, I know very well a lad that would be blithe to accept a pretty token of any lady's high esteem."

"But you have one already, a very beautiful one." She gave him a genial up and down glance from head to foot, half quizzical and half applauding, but so quick he scarcely saw it, and he was glad he had resurrected the straw hat with the youthful ribbon and his other festal vestures. "And a very becoming flower a white rose is," she continued, "though I am a bold girl to be blarneying with a young gentleman I met no longer ago than last night."

"But why shouldn't you blarney with a gentleman when you began by saving his life?"

"Especially when the gentleman had the politeness to gallop about the county with me tucked under his arm." She stood still and laughed softly, but consummately, and her eyes closed tight with the mirth of it. She had taken one of the roses from her waist, and as she stood holding it by the long stem its cool petals lightly pressed her lips.

"You may have it—in exchange," she said. He bent down to her, and she fastened her rose in place of the white one in his coat. She did not ask him, directly or indirectly, who had put the white one there for him. She knew by the way it was pinned that he had done it himself. "Who is it that ev'ry morning brings me these lovely flowers?" she burlesqued as he bent over her.

"Mr. Wimby," he returned. "I will point him out to you. You must see him and Mr. Bodeffer, who is the oldest inhabitant and the crossest of Carlow."

"Will you present them to me?"

"No; they might talk to you and take some of my time with you away from me."

Her eyes sparkled into his for the merest fraction of a second, and she laughed. Then she dropped his lapel, and they proceeded. She did not put the white rose in her belt, but carried it.

The square was heaving with a jostling, moving, good natured, happy and constantly increasing crowd that overflowed on Main street in both directions and whose good nature augmented in the ratio that its size increased. The streets were a kaleidoscope of many colors, and every window opening on Main street or the square was filled with eager faces. By 9 o'clock all the windows of the courthouse in the center of the square were occupied. Here most of the damsels congregated to enjoy the spectacle of the parade, and their swains attended, posted at coigns of less vantage behind the ladies. Some of the faces that peeped from the windows of the dark, old, shady courthouse were pretty, and some of them were not pretty, but nearly all of them were rosy cheeked, and all were pleasant to see because of the good cheer they kept.

Here and there, along the sidewalk below, a father worked his way through the throng, a licorice bedaubed cherub on one arm, his coat (borne with long enough) on the other, followed by a mother, with the other children hanging to her skirts and tagging exasperatingly behind, holding red and blue toy balloons and delectable candy batons of spiral striped peppermint in tightly closed, sadly sticky fingers. A thousand cries rent the air—the strolling mountebanks and gypsying booth merchants, the peanut venders, the boys with palm leaf fans for sale, the candy sellers, the popcorn peddlers, the Italian with the toy balloons that float like a cluster of colored bubbles above the heads of the crowd and the balloons that wail like a baby; the red lemonade man, shouting in the shrill voice that reaches everywhere and endures forever: "Lemo'! Lemo'! Five a glass! Ice cole lemo'! Five cents, a nickel, a half a dime, the twentieth-potofadollah! Lemo'! Ice cole lemo'!"—all the vociferating harbingers of the circus crying their wares. Timid youths in shoes covered with dust through which the morning polish but dimly shone and unalterably hooked by the arm to blushing maidens bought recklessly of peanuts, of candy, of popcorn, of all known sweetmeats, perchance, and forced their way to the lemonade stands, and there, all shyly, silently sipped the crimson stained ambrosia. Everywhere the hawkers dinned, and everywhere was heard the plaintive squawk of the toy balloon.

In the courthouse yard, and so sinning in the very eye of the law, two swarthy, shifty looking gentlemen were operating with some greasy walnut shells and a pea what the fanciful or unsophisticated might have been pleased to call a game of chance, and the most intent spectator of the group around them was Mr. James Bardlock, the town marshal. He was simply and unofficially and earnestly interested. Thus the eye of the law may not be said to have winked upon the nefariousness now under its vision. It gazed with strong curiosity, an itch to dabble and, it must be admitted, a growing hope of profit, the game was so direct and the player so sure. Several countrymen had won small sums, and one, a charmingly rustic stranger, with a peculiar accent (he said that him and his goll should now have a smoot' olt time off his winninks, though the lady was not manifested) had pocketed $25 with no trouble at all. The two operators seemed depressed, declaring the luck against them and the Plattville people too brilliant at the game.

It was wonderful how the young couples worked their way arm in arm through the thickest crowds, never separating. Even at the lemonade stands they drank holding the glasses in their outer hands. Such are the sacrifices demanded by etiquette. But, observing the gracious outpouring of fortune upon the rare rustic just mentioned, a youth in a green tie disengaged his arm—for the first time in two hours—from that of a girl who looked upon him with fond, uncertain smiles and, conducting her to a corner of the yard, bade her remain there until he returned. He had to speak to Hartley Bowlder, he explained.

Then he plunged, red faced and excited, into the circle about the shell manipulators and offered to lay a wager.

"Hol' on there, Hen Fentriss," thickly objected a flushed young man beside him. "Iss my turn."

"I'm first, Hartley," returned the other. "You can hold yer hosses, I reckon."

"Plenty fer each and all, gents," interrupted one of the shell men. "Place yer spondulics on de little ball. W'ich is de nex' lucky gent to win our money? Gent bets four sixty-five he seen de little ball go under de middle shell. Up she comes! Dis time we wins. Plattville can't win every time. Who's de nex' lucky gent?"

Fentriss edged slowly out of the circle, abashed and with rapidly whitening cheeks. He paused for a moment outside, slowly realizing that all his money had gone in one wild, blind whirl—the money he had earned so hard and saved so hard to make a holiday for his sweetheart and himself. He stole one glance around the building to where a patient figure waited for him. Then he fled down a side alley and soon was out upon the country road, tramping suddenly homeward through the dust, his chin sunk in his breast and his hands clinched tight at his sides. Now and then he stopped and bitterly hurled a stone at a piping bird on the fence or gay bobwhite in the fields. At noon the patient figure was still waiting in the corner of the courthouse yard, meekly twisting a coral ring upon her finger.

But the flushed young man who had spoken thickly to her deserter drew an envied roll of bank bills from his pocket and began to bet with tipsy caution, while the circle about the gamblers watched with fervid interest, especially Mr. Bardlock, town marshal.

From far up Main street came the cry "She's a-comin'! She's a-comin!" and this announcement of the parade proving only one of a dozen false alarms a thousand discussions took place over old fashioned silver timepieces as to when "she" was really due. Schofields' Henry was much appealed to as an arbiter in these discussions, from a sense of his having a good deal to do with time in a general sort of way, and thus Schofields' came to be reminded that it was getting on toward 10 o'clock, whereas, in the excitement of festival, he had not yet struck 9. This, rushing forthwith to do, he did, and, in the elation of the moment, seven or eight besides. Miss Helen Sherwood was looking down on the mass of shifting color from a second story window of the courthouse, and she had the pleasure of seeing Schofields' emerge on the steps beneath her when the bells had done and heard the cheers (led by Mr. Martin) with which the crowd greeted his appearance after the performance of his feat.

She turned beamingly to Harkless. "What a family it is!" she laughed. "Just one big, jolly family! I didn't know people could be like this until I came to Plattville."

"That is the word for it," he said, resting his hand on the casement beside her. "I used to think it was desolate, but that was long ago." He leaned from the window to look down. In his dark cheek was a glow the Carlow folks had never seen there, and somehow he seemed less thin and tired than usual; indeed, he did not seem tired at all, by far the contrary, and he carried himself upright, when he was not stooping to see under the hat, though not as if he thought about it. "I believe they are the best people I know," he went on. "Perhaps it is because they have been so kind to me; but they are kind to each other, too—kind, good people."

"I know," she said, nodding. "I know. There are fat women, women who rock and rock on piazzas by the sea, and they speak of country people as the 'lower classes.' How happy this big family is in not knowing it is the lower classes!"

"We haven't read Nordau down here," said John. "Old Tom Martin's favorite work is 'The Descent of Man,' and Miss Tibbs cares most for 'Lalla Rookh' and 'Beulah.' And why not?"

"It was a girl from Southeast Cottonbridge, Mass.," said Helen, "who heard I was from Indiana and asked me if I didn't 'hate to live so far away from things.'" There was a pause while she leaned out of the window with her face aside from him. Then she remarked carelessly, "I met her at Winter Harbor."

"Do you go to Winter Harbor?" he asked.

"We have gone there every summer until this one for years. Have you friends who go there?"

"I had once. There was a classmate of mine from Rouen"—

"What was his name? Perhaps I know him." She stole a glance at him and saw that his face had fallen into sad lines.

"He's forgotten me, I dare say. I haven't seen him for seven years, and that's a long time, you know, and he's 'out in the world,' where remembering is harder. Here in Plattville we don't forget."

"Were you ever at Winter Harbor?"

"I was once. I spent a very happy day there long ago, when you must have been a little girl. Were you there in"—

"Listen!" she cried. "The procession is coming. Look at the people!"

The parade had seized a psychological moment. There was a fanfare of trumpets in the east. Lines of people rushed for the streets, and as one looked down on the big straw hats and sunbonnets and many kinds of finer head apparel tossing forward they seemed like surf sweeping up the long beaches. She was coming at last. The boys whooped in the middle of the street. Some tossed their arms to heaven, others expressed their emotion by somersaults; those most deeply moved walked on their hands. In the distance one saw over the heads of the multitude tossing banners and the moving crests of triumphal cars, where "cohorts were shining in purple and gold."

There was another flourish of music. Then all the band gave sound, and, with the blare of brass and the crash of drums, the glory of the parade burst upon Plattville. Glory in the utmost! The impetus of the march time music, the flare of royal banners, the smiling of beautiful court ladies and great silken nobles, the swaying of howdahs on camel and elephant and the awesome shaking of the earth beneath the elephant's feet and his devastating eye (every one declared he looked the alarmed Mr. Bill Snoddy, stoutest citizen of the county, full in the face as he passed him, and Mr. Snoddy felt not at all reassured when Tom Martin severely hinted that it was with the threatening glance of a rival); then the badinage of the clown, creaking by in his donkey cart; the terrific recklessness of the spangled hero who was drawn along in a cage with two striped tigers—the delight of all this glittering pomp and pageantry needed even more than walking on your hands to express.

Last of all came the tooting calliope, followed by swarms of boys as it executed "Wait Till the Clouds Roll By, Jennie," with infinite gusto.

When it had gone Miss Sherwood's gaze relaxed—she had been looking on as eagerly as any child—and she turned to speak to Harkless and discovered that he was no longer in the room. Instead she found Minnie and Mr. Willetts, whom he had summoned from another window.

"He was called away," explained Lige. "He thought he'd be back before the parade was over and said you were enjoying it so much he didn't want to speak to you."

"Called away?"

Minnie laughed. "Oh, everybody sends for Mr. Harkless."

"It was a farmer name of Bowlder," added Mr. Willetts. "His son Hartley 's drinking again, and there ain't any one but Harkless can do anything with him. You let him tackle a sick man to nurse or a tipsy feller to handle, and I tell you," Mr. Willetts went on, with enthusiasm, "he is at home. It beats me, and lots of people don't think college does a man any good. Why, the way he cured old Fis"— Miss Briscoe interrupted him.

"See!" she cried, pointing out of the window. "Look out there! Something's happened!"

There was a swirl in the crowd below. Men were running around a corner of the courthouse, and the women and children were barking after. They went so fast and there were so many of them that immediately that whole portion of the yard became a pushing, tugging, squirming jam of people.

"It's on the other side," said Lige. "We can see from the hall window. Come quick before these other folks fill it up."

They followed him across the building and looked down on an agitated swarm of faces. Five men were standing on the entrance steps to the door below them, and the crowd was thickly massed beyond, leaving a little semicircle clear about the steps. Those behind struggled to get closer and leaped in the air to catch a glimpse of what was going on. Harkless stood alone on the top step, his hand resting on the shoulder of the pale and contrite and sobered Hartley. On the lowest step Jim Bardlock was standing with sheepishly hanging head and between him and Harkless the two gamblers of the walnut shells. The journalist held in his hand the implements of their profession.

"Yes; give up every cent," he said quietly. "You've taken $86 from this boy. Hand it over."

The men began to edge down closer to the crowd, giving little, swift, desperate, searching looks from left to right and right to left and moving nervously about like weasels in a trap.

"Close up, there," said Harkless. "Don't let them out."

"W'y can't we git no square treatment here?" one of the gamblers whined. But his eyes blazed with a rage that belied the plaintive passivity of his tone. "We ain't been runnin' no skin. W'y d'ye say we gotter give up our own money? You gotter prove it was a skin. We risked our money fair."

"Prove it! Come up here, Eph Watts. Friends"—the editor turned to the crowd, smiling—"friends, here's a man we ran out of town once because he knew too much about things of this sort. He's come back to us again, and he's here to stay. He'll give us an object lesson on the shell game."

"It's pretty simple," remarked Mr. Watts. "The best way is to pick up the ball with your second finger and the back part of your thumb, as you pretend to lay the shell down over it—this way." He illustrated and showed several methods of manipulation with professional sang froid, and as he made plan the vulgar swindle by which many had been duped that morning there arose an angry and threatening murmur.

"You all see," said Harkless, raising his voice, "what a simple cheat it is—an old, worn out one. Yet a lot of you lost your own money on it and then stood by, staring like idiots, and let Hartley Bowlder lose $86, and not one of you lifted a hand. How hard did you work for what these two cheap crooks took from you? Ah," he cried, "it is because you were greedy that they robbed you so easily! You know it's true. It's when you want to get something for nothing that the 'confidence men' steal the money you sweat for and make you the laughingstock of the country. And you, Jim Bardlock, town marshal; you, who confess that you 'went in the game 60 cents' worth' yourself"— His face was wrathful and stern as he raised his accusing hand and leveled it at the unhappy municipal.

The town marshal smiled uneasily and deprecatingly about him and, seeing only angry, frowning brows, hearing only words of condemnation, passed his hand unsteadily over his fat mustache, shifted from one leg to the other and back again, looked up, looked down, and then, an amiable and pleasure loving man, beholding nothing but accusation and wrath in heaven and earth and wishing nothing more than to sink into the waters under the earth, but having no way of reaching them, and finding his troubles quite unbearable and himself unable to meet the manifold eye of man, he sought relief after the unsagacious fashion of a larger bird than he. His burly form underwent a series of convulsions not unlike sobs, and he shut his eyes tight and held them so, presenting a picture of misery unequaled in the memory of

"You, you, a man elected to"—

any spectator. The editor's outstretched hand began to shake. "You," he tried to continue; "you, a man elected to"—

There came from the crowd the sound of a sad, high keyed voice drawling, "That's a nice vest Jim's got on, but it ain't hardly the feathers fitten for an ostrich, is it?"

Harkless broke into a ringing laugh and turned to the shell men. "Give up the boy's money. Hurry."

"Step down here and git it," said the one who had spoken.

There was a turbulent motion in the crowd, and a cry arose: "Run 'em out! Ride 'em on a rail! Tar and feathers! Run 'em out o' town!"

"I wouldn't dillydally long if I were you," said Harkless. A roll of bills was sullenly placed in his hand, which he counted and turned over to the elder Bowlder. One of the shell men clutched the editor's sleeve with his dirty hand.

"We hain't done wi' youse," he said hoarsely. "Don't belief it, not for a minute, see?"

The town marshal opened his eyes briskly and, placing a hand on each of the gamblers, said, "I do hereby arrest your said persons and declare you my prisoners."

The cry arose again louder: "Run 'em out! String 'em up! Hang 'em! Hang them!" And a forward rush was made.

"This way, Jim. Quick!" cried Harkless, bending down and jerking one of the gamblers half way up the steps. "Get through the hall to the other side and then run 'em to the lockup. No one will stop you that way. Watts and I will hold this door."

Bardlock hustled his prisoners through the doorway, and the crowd pushed up the steps, while Harkless struggled to keep the vestibule clear until Watts got the double doors closed. "Stand back, there!" he shouted. "It's all over. Don't be foolish. The law is good enough for us. Stand back, will you?" He was shoving vigorously with open hand and elbow, when a compact little group of men suddenly dashed up the steps together, and a heavy stick swung out over their heads. A straw hat with a gay ribbon sailed through the air. The editor's long arms went out swiftly from his body in several directions, the hands not open, but clinched and hard. The next instant he and Mr. Watts stood alone on the steps, and a man with a bleeding, blaspheming mouth dropped his stick and tried to lose himself in the crowd. Mr. Watts was returning something he had not used to his hip pocket.

"Prophets of Israel!" exclaimed William Todd ruefully. "It wasn't Eph Watts' pistol. Did you see Mr. Harkless? I was up on them steps when he begun. I don't believe he needs as much takin' care of as we think."

"Wasn't it one of them Crossroads devils that knocked his hat off?" asked Judd Bennett. "I thought I see Bob Skillett run up with a club."

Harkless threw open the doors behind him. The hall was empty. "You may come in now," he said. "This isn't my courthouse."

TO BE CONTINUED.

The Reward of an Ancestor.

"Why are you losing sleep and exerting your energies to win fame and fortune?" asked the man who avoids enthusiasms.

"I don't know, exactly," answered the man with a passion for work. "I suppose my reward will come in future generations when some young man is enabled by my previous exertions to wear a monocle and say 'by Jove' instead of working."—Washington Star.

Fiendish Ingenuity.

"Brooks," said Rivers, "look at that cane Upgardson carries."

"What's peculiar about it?" asked Brooks.

"It's a deadly weapon—that's all."

"Sword?"

"Worse than that."

"Rifle?"

"Worse than that," said Rivers, in an agitated voice. "It's a flute."—Chicago Tribune.

Dangerous Learning.

Yeast—I see a school has been started in Washington where scholars are taught to be ambidextrous.

Crimsonbeak—Taught to use both hands?

"Precisely."

"Well, I hope they'll manage to keep the graduates out of the treasury."—Yonkers Statesman.

Too Close to Touch.

Long—Are you acquainted with Grumpitt?

Short—Sure. He's one of my closest friends.

Long—Indeed?

Short—Yes. Why, he's so close that I can't even borrow a dollar of him.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Another Chance Encounter.

Leftrich (formerly Saymold Storey, acknowledging introduction at club)—Seems to me we met once before, in a Pullman sleeper.

Fellaire (formerly Rusty Rufus)—Quite likely. One meets all sorts of people in one's travels.—Chicago Tribune.

Happily Adjusted.

"Let's arrive at a mutual understanding," said the Englishman, after the heat of the argument had subsided, "I don't want you to think I'm a thief."

"Av coorse not," replied the Irishman, "an' Oi don't want ye to t'ink Oi t'ink ye're a thafe. But ye are."—N. Y. Tribune.

One Sort.

"There goes Roxham. Every time I think of that man's financial embarrassment, it makes me yearn to help him."

"Financial embarrassment?"

"Yes; he's got so much money he doesn't know what to do with it."—Catholic Standard and Times.

Proved the Proverb.

"Nuritch has proven the truth of the old saying, 'Money makes the mare go.'"

"How so?"

"He was satisfied with that little mare he had until he got money enough to buy an automobile."—Philadelphia Ledger.

American Apples in Berlin.

American apples are seen on every fruit stand and are peddled through every street in Berlin, the price being five cents a pound. Germany consumed about 7,600 tons of our apples during last year.